

LEAF SHEEP

costasiella kuroshimae
PLUSH



a free sewing pattern by



leaf sheep plush

Costasiella kuroshimae are an adorably unique species of sea slug also known as leaf sheep! They were originally discovered off the coast of the Japanese island Kuroshima and are known for their leaf-like **cerata** that cover their body. When the slug eats algae, these leaves store the chloroplasts. That means the little slug can perform photosynthesis just like a plant!

This plush version has a tiny body that's covered in several rows of leaves, each of which has a tiny (optional) accent tip. The head is attached to the front, and has a small cute face with accent antennae (technically **rhinophores**).

DIFFICULTY:



The hardest part of this plush is the time it takes to attach all the leaf tips, though it helps to know they are optional. It is also challenging to line up all of the leaf and body pieces to build the shape of the full body.

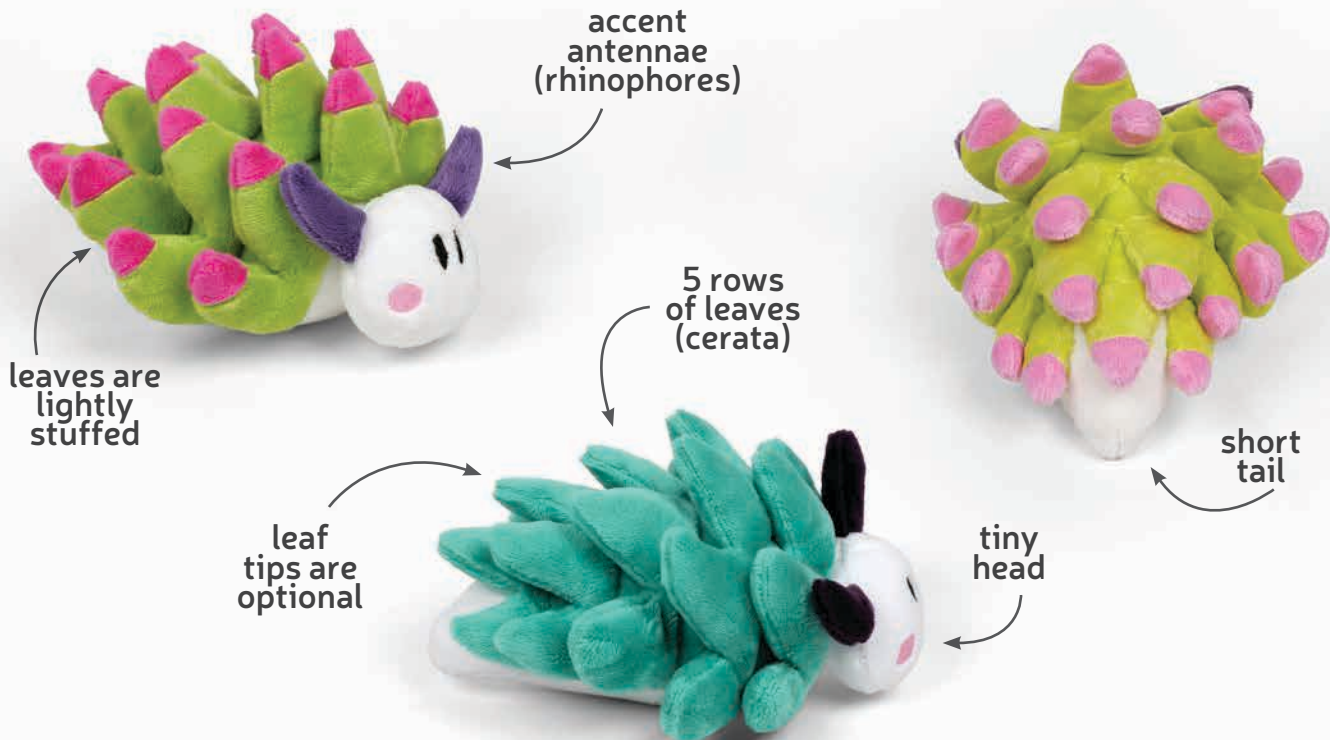
MAKES:

ONE PLUSH:

About 8" long, 6" wide from each side of leaves, and 4" tall from bottom of body to tip of leaves.

SKILLS USED:

- Fusible web applique
- Curved sewing
- Ladder stitch
- Sewing small pieces
- Basting
- Darts
- Matching notches & points



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MATERIALS & TOOLS:

- ¼ yd. (or 13" x 9") of white fabric for body
- ⅓ yd. of green fabric for leaves
- ⅛ yd. (or 7" x 3") of purple fabric for antennae
- **OPTIONAL ACCENT FABRIC FOR LEAF TIPS:**
 - ❑ **Scrap fabric:** small bits equivalent to 42 squares about 2¼" wide by 1½" tall (*check out step 9, page 12 to see them in action*)
 - ❑ **Or new fabric:** ⅛ yd. of new fabric, cut into two 50" long, 1½" tall strips (see cutting layout for more details).
- **APPLIQUE SUPPLIES:**
 - 2" x 2" of black fabric for eyes
 - 2" x 2" of pink fabric for blush
 - 3" x 3" of light or heavy duty fusible web
 - sewing thread to match main fabric and applique fabrics
 - poly-fil stuffing
 - basic sewing tools (sewing machine, scissors, iron, needles, pins, fabric marker, seam ripper)

FUSIBLE WEB:

- Fusible web adhesive is a sheet of adhesive with a paper backing.
Not to be confused with fusible interfacing, which is adhesive attached to a fabric/fiber backing.
- Some common brands are **Pellon** & **HeateBond**
- In countries outside the US, it may also be known as **bondaweb**
- It comes in **light** and **heavy duty** varieties. Lightweight strength is meant for applique you intend to sew later. Heavy duty versions are for a no-sew bond. If you try to sew them later your machine might have trouble penetrating the glue.



APPLIQUE FABRICS:

- Good applique fabrics include **flannel**, **cotton**, **felt**, **minky**, and **fleece**.
- Flannel and cotton are best for detailed applique with a lot of layers because they're thinner. Meanwhile felt, minky, and fleece are better for simpler applique like body markings.
- **Flannel** is used in the example instructions (page 8).



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fabric comparison:



SUGGESTED BODY FABRICS:

MINKY OR FLEECE

Medium weight, plush fabrics with about 20%-30% stretch along the crosswise grain work best for this project. The varieties shown to the left are some good options and names to look for. Try to avoid heavyweight versions of fleece that are intended for outdoor apparel or they may cause trouble for the detailed areas.

You can also use non-stretch fabrics (such as felt), but be aware that the curves will be more difficult to sew and the result will look different. The plush will become more elongated and the edges will look sharper.

10" of minky
stretches to 13"
= 30% stretch



MINKY

VS.

FELT



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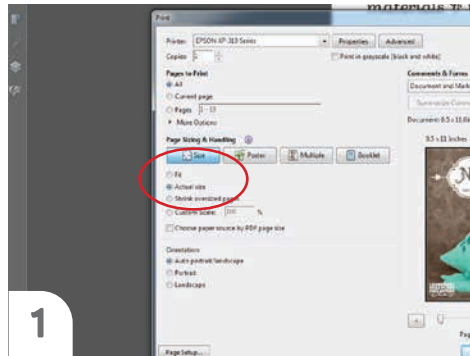
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PRINTING THE PATTERN:

Set your computer to print pages 21-25.

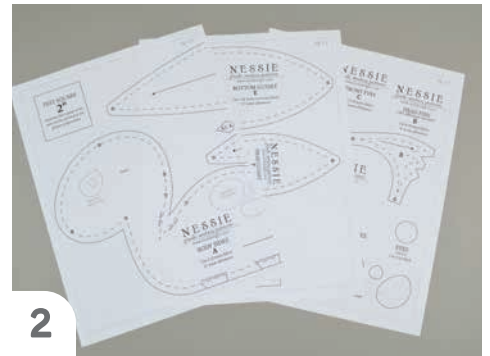
If you're unfamiliar with printing and assembling a .pdf pattern, read the steps to follow.

For the best results, use a .pdf reader like **ADOBE READER**. That's what is shown here and will give you the most control over the settings.



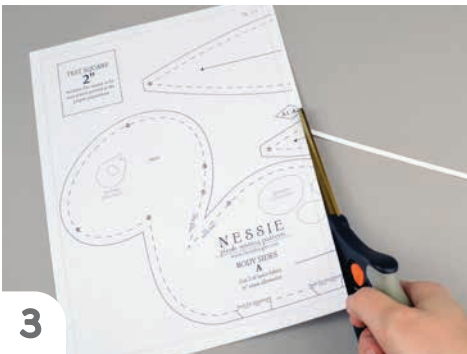
1

At the print dialog box, check the box that says print at "Actual Size" or 100%. Any other selection (such as "Fit to page") will distort the pattern so it's slightly larger or smaller and we don't want that.



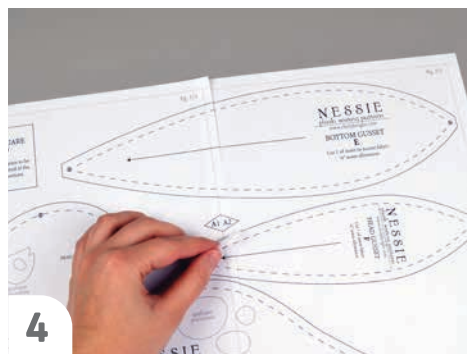
2

Print the pages needed for the file. You might have one or more. Either way, be sure you have the full collection by noting the page numbers in the corner.



3

It's likely your printer will have a margin that ensures your image doesn't print to the very edge. Assembly will be easier if you trim off this blank margin edge. This will give you pages that overlap slightly during assembly. If you trim across the gray outline boxes, this will give you pages that don't overlap but rather butt against each other.



4

To line up the pattern pages, match up the corresponding diamond shapes. Each diamond will have a letter, so it's simply a matter of matching A1 to A2, B3 to B4 and so on. The faint gray lines indicate the border of every page, you should be able to line those up as well. When the diamond goes together, tape it in place.

If you have many pages, it's easier to tape up the pages into rows first. Then tape the rows together into a full block.



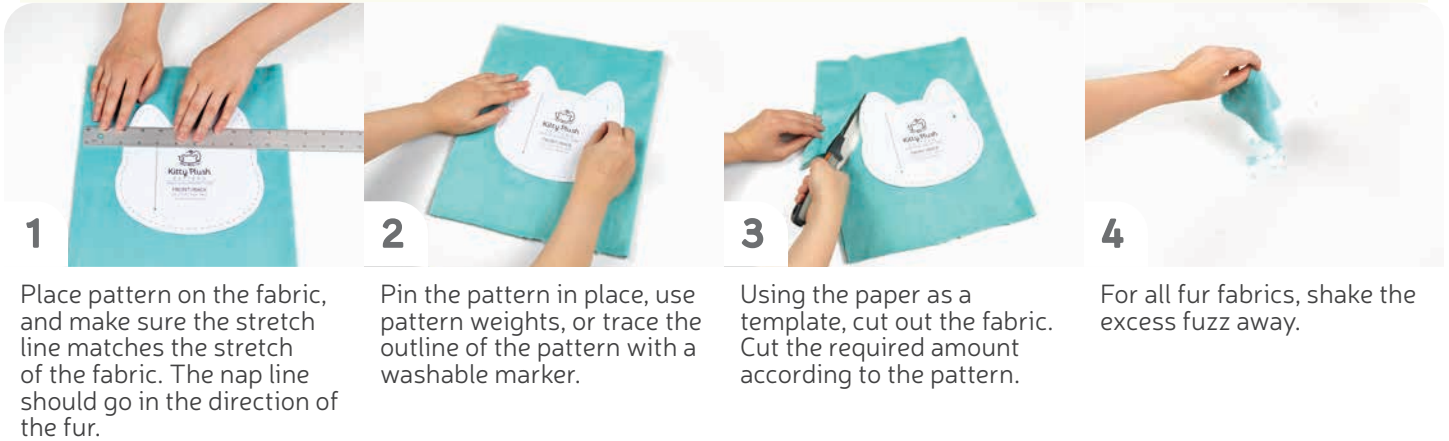
5

You can trace the patterns onto a different paper, or you can also just cut them straight from the printer paper -- be sure that each piece is fully taped together along the joins so they don't fall apart when you cut them.

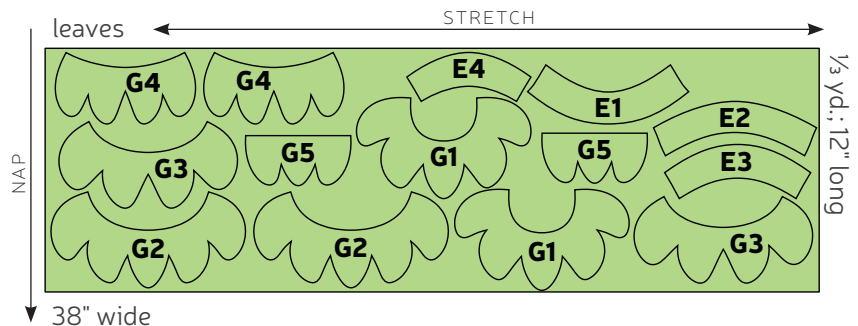
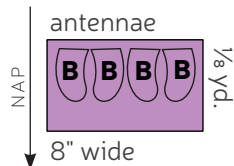
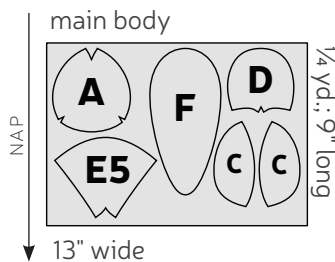
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CUTTING THE FABRIC:



CUTTING LAYOUT: NO ACCENT LEAF TIPS



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1. PREP THE LEAF TEMPLATES

→ *There are many little accent leaf tips on this animal. The rougher method used to make them in this project will hopefully go more smoothly since it doesn't involve keeping track of lots of little pieces.*

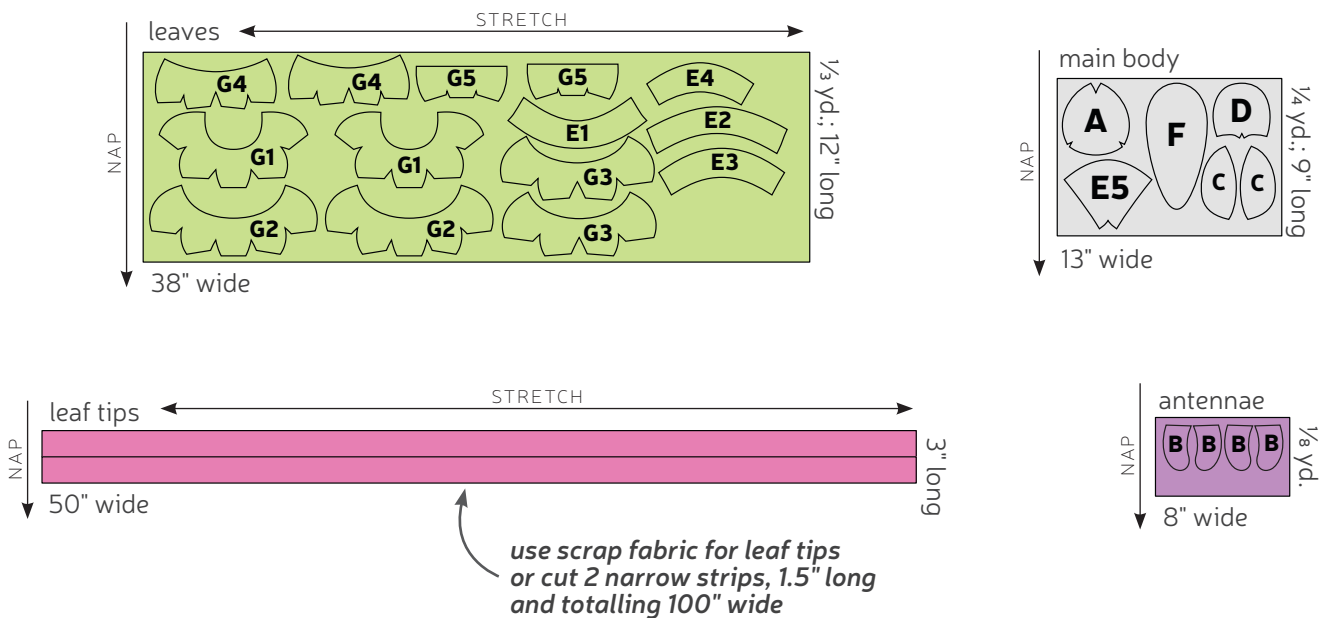


a. Before cutting your fabric, take your **LEAF TEMPLATES**

(G1 through G5) and find the **fold line guides**. Fold the paper along the **fold lines** so the tips make a straight edge instead of a curved one. Don't cut the template since we'll use the full piece again later in the project.

b. Use these new templates to cut out your fabric, shown below.

CUTTING LAYOUT: ACCENT LEAF TIPS



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BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- Briefly read the project instructions so you know what to expect.
- If desired, mark the cut fabric pieces with the markings and symbols from the pattern. Or wait until the applicable step before transferring.
- Note that a ¼" seam allowance is used for the project unless otherwise mentioned. The seam allowance is included in the pattern templates.

2. FUSE THE EYE APPLIQUE

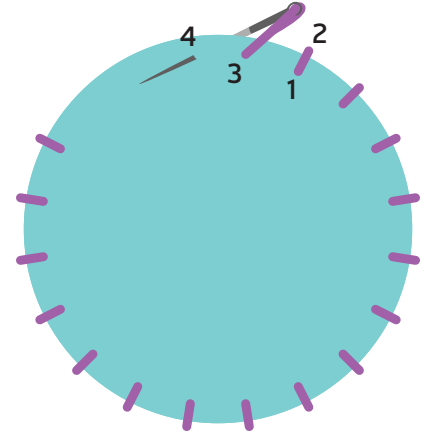
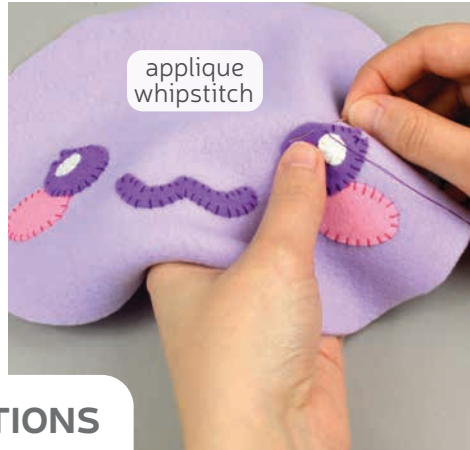
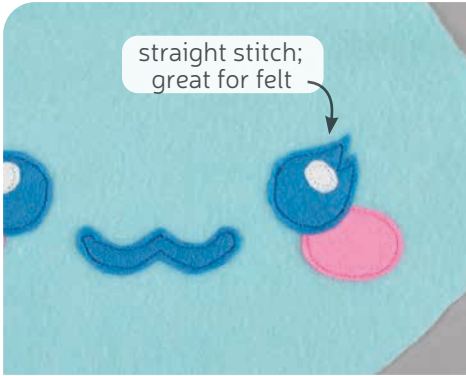


- Grab your fusible web and applique templates. Trace the pieces for the **eyes and blush**. You should have:
 - **eyes** (2, black)
 - **blush** (2, pink)
 - Fuse the bumpy (adhesive) side of the fusible web onto the applique fabrics.
 - Cut out your applique pieces and grab your **HEAD FRONT** piece (A). Grab the **eye** applique piece. Set your paper pattern on top of the head front piece. Align the applique piece on top where the placement markings are. Next, carefully pull the paper pattern away while holding the applique piece in place.
 - Fuse the applique pieces with your iron. Use a press cloth, such as a scrap piece of cotton. This will help protect any polyester or fuzzy fabrics from melting or scorching. Continue with the **blush**. Fuse them the same way using the paper pattern and photos as a guide.
- This should complete the applique. If you used heavy duty fusible web, you can keep the pieces fused without sewing. If you used lighter fusible web, you'll want to stitch the pieces in place. A zigzag stitch with matching thread works nicely around the edges. For hand sewing options, see the next page.



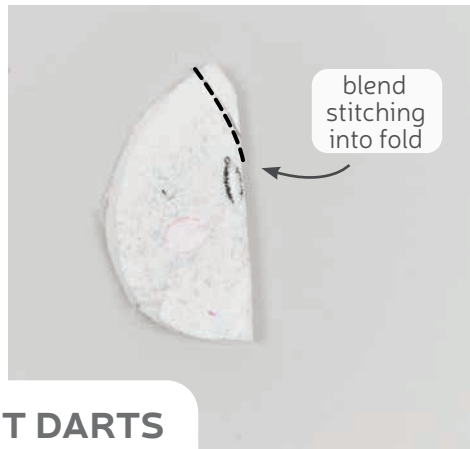
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3. OTHER APPLIQUE OPTIONS

- Other good options for applique include a straight stitch, which involves sewing around the edge of the applique pieces with a straight stitch using matching thread -- about 1/8" in from the edge.
- You can also applique by hand; I prefer a whipstitch. Thread a hand-sewing needle with some matching thread and knot it. Bring the thread up from the back of the project; about 1/8" in from the edge of the applique shape. Bring it down perpendicular from the curve, just outside of the applique shape. This completes one stitch.
- For the next stitch, bring the needle back up about 1/8" away from the previous stitch and 1/8" in from the edge just as in the first stitch. Once again, bring it down just outside the applique shape. Continue this way until you've sewn around the shape.



4. SEW THE HEAD FRONT DARTS

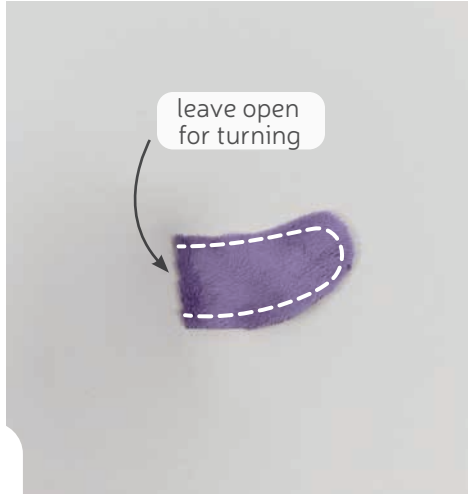
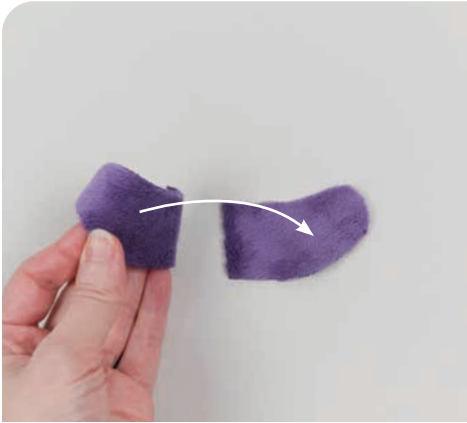
- Grab your **HEAD FRONT** piece (A). This piece has several **darts** all around the outer edge. These are the small wedge shapes found labeled on the paper pattern. To sew them, start by folding the fabric along the point of the **dart**. Here we're starting with the center top **dart**. Make sure right sides are facing and pin the fabrics together.
- Sew the dart starting at the opening and work your way into the fold of the fabric. Try to blend your stitching into the fold for a smooth transition and a rounder finish to the plush.
- Repeat this with the remaining two **darts** at the lower corners for three **darts** total.

DARTS:

A wedge-shaped gap found in a pattern. When sewn in fabric, it creates a tuck in the fabric and develops a 3D shape. The diagonal sides of the wedge are the **LEGS**; these are matched up and sewn to the **POINT** of the dart.

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5. SEW THE ANTENNAE

- Grab your **ANTENNAE** pieces (B). Take two of them and align them with right sides facing and the raw edges matching up.
- Sew the pieces together along the long curved edge. Leave the straight edge free for turning the piece right side out later.
- Turn the antenna right side out, then repeat this step with your remaining antennae pieces so you have a matching pair.



6. BASTE THE ANTENNAE

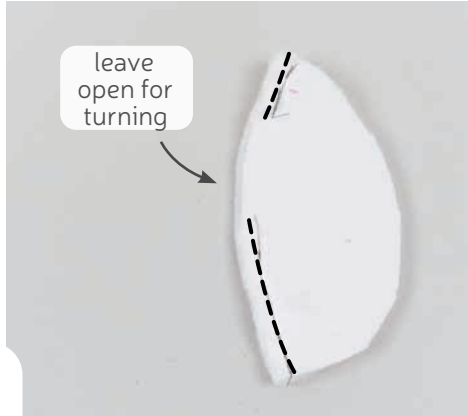
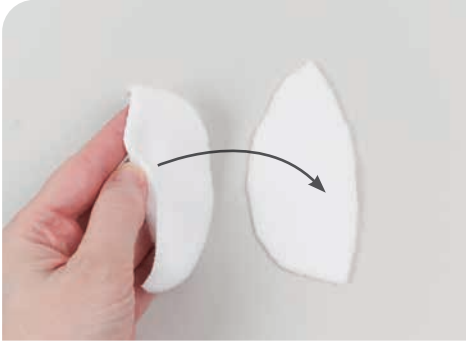
- Stuff the **ANTENNAE** (B) lightly with stuffing.
- If you haven't already, note the **antennae placement lines** found on the paper pattern for the **HEAD FRONT** (A). Align the antennae within these lines so the raw edges match up.
- Now flip the antennae inward so the tips are pointing toward the middle of the head. The raw edges of the antennae and the head should be flush. Pin the antennae in place, then baste them within the seam allowance to hold them in place.

BASTING:

A form of temporary sewing meant to hold pieces in place. A long stitch length is often used for this reason. The finished result is not meant to be seen and sometimes is even removed later (depending on your project).

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7. SEW THE HEAD BACK

- Grab your **HEAD BACK** pieces (C). Align them with right sides facing and the raw edges matching up. Pin the fabrics together.
- If you haven't already, note the **opening for turning markings** found on the paper pattern for the head back. Transfer these markings onto the wrong side of the fabrics you've just pinned. Sew the pieces together along the center back edge, but leave the **opening for turning** that you marked.
- Open up the pieces when complete.



8. ATTACH THE HEAD BACK

- Grab your **HEAD FRONT** from before (A). Take your head back piece and align it over the head front so right sides are facing and the raw edges match up. You can also look for the **pattern markings** for help with alignment. The **filled circle marking** should line up at the center top, and the **open circle marking** will line up at the center bottom. Make sure the antennae are tucked inside and pin the fabrics together.
- Sew the head back to the front all the way around going through the **filled circle markings** and the **open circle markings**.
- Turn the head right side out to complete. Set the head aside until the end while we work on the body.

Up next are the steps for the **ACCENT LEAF TIPS**.
If you don't have accent leaf tips, skip ahead to step 11.

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9. ATTACH THE LEAF TIPS



- To create the accent leaf tips, start by grabbing your **accent fabric strips or scraps**. Also grab one of your **LEAF** pieces. This example shows the **FRONT LEAVES #1 (G1)**. Take some of your accent fabric and roughly align it with the straight edge of one of the leaves so right sides are facing. There should be about $\frac{1}{2}$ " of extra fabric on each side. Pin the fabrics together.
- Sew the accent fabric to the tip of the leaf going across the straight edge of the leaf. Use the regular $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance.
- Trim the extra fabric about $\frac{1}{2}$ " away from the seam.
- Repeat this going down the rest of the leaf piece so every leaf has accent fabric on the tip.

→ **PRO TIP:** as you get used to it, you can even attach each accent piece without cutting the threads. This is called **chain sewing** and will make the sewing much faster. When you end one seam, back stitch, raise your needle and lift your presser foot like you usually would. Instead of removing the fabric entirely, pull the thread and fabric about 1-2" away and go right into the next seam. Continue this way down the entire leaf piece. When complete, trim the threads that connect all the seams.

10. TRIM THE LEAF TIPS

- Grab your **LEAF TEMPLATE** from before (here it's G1). Unfold the leaf tips so the template is whole again.
- Align this template onto your fabric with the accent tips attached. Use this template to trim away the rough shapes of the **accent tips**. Repeat steps 9-10 once more with your other leaf piece so you have a matching pair.

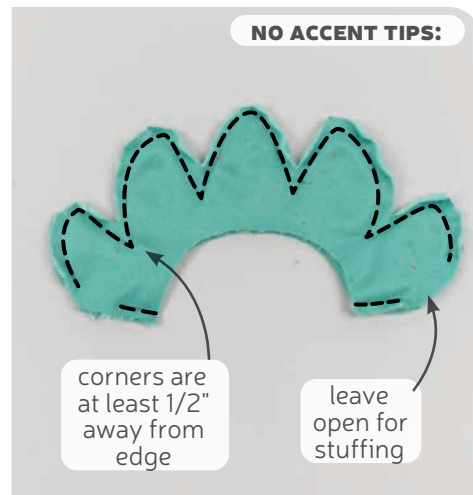


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11. SEW THE LEAVES



- Take your two **LEAF PIECES** (here G1 is shown) and align them with right sides facing and the raw edges matching up. Pin the fabrics together.
- If you haven't already, note the **opening for stuffing markings** found on the paper pattern for the leaves. Transfer these markings onto the wrong side of the fabrics you've just pinned. Sew the leaf pieces together along the pointed edges. Leave the **openings for stuffing** and the curved edge along the bottom free for turning the piece right side out later.

→ **TIP:** be sure that there's at least a 1/2" space between the inner corners of the leaves and the edge. This will make stuffing the leaves easier later.

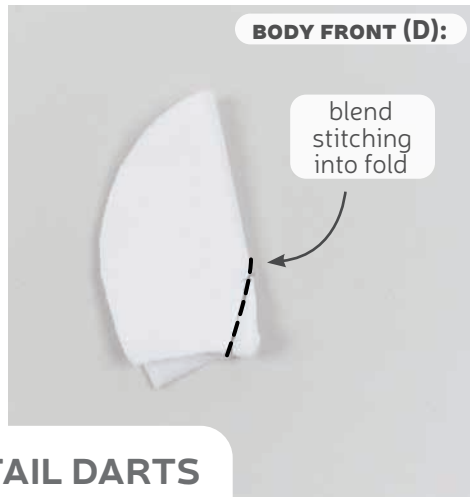


12. TRIM & TURN THE LEAVES

- Trim the excess seam allowance around the tight corners and curves of the leaves. Trim the outer curves to reduce bulk so the tips of the leaves have a nice shape. Clip the inner corners of the leaves to increase flexibility so the piece turns more cleanly.
- Turn the leaves right side out through the opening at the bottom. Define the tips of the leaves with a chopstick or similar turning tool.
- Repeat steps 9-12 with your remaining leaf pieces. You should have **G1, G2, G3, G4, AND G5** sewn for a total of 5 sets of **LEAVES**.

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13. SEW THE FRONT & TAIL DARTS

- Grab your **BODY FRONT (D)** and **BODY SEGMENT #5 - TAIL END (E5)** pieces. These pieces have **darts** just like the head front from before. Sew them the same way starting by folding the fabric along the point of the **dart**. This should line up the slanted edges with right sides facing. Pin the fabrics together.
- Sew the **darts** similar to the previous ones. Start at the opening of the **dart** and sew your way into the fold of the fabric. Try to blend your stitching into the fold for a smooth transition and a rounder finish. Repeat this for both the body front and the tail end.



14. BASTE THE FRONT LEAVES

- Grab your **LEAVES (G1 through G5)** and your **BODY SEGMENT** pieces (E1 through E5). Each leaf will join to its corresponding body segment. We'll start with segment 1. You can look for the **numbered points** for help with alignment. Look for **point 1** at the center of both segment 1 and leaf 1.
- Take the raw edge of your leaves and line them up with the body segment so **point 1** matches up in the middle. Line up the rest of the edges and there should be a $\frac{1}{4}$ " space on each side for the seam allowance. The pattern pieces also have **square markings** as a reminder. Pin the fabrics together.
- Baste the leaves to the body segment along the edge with **point 1**. Make sure the leaves stop $\frac{1}{4}$ " from each side for the seam allowance.

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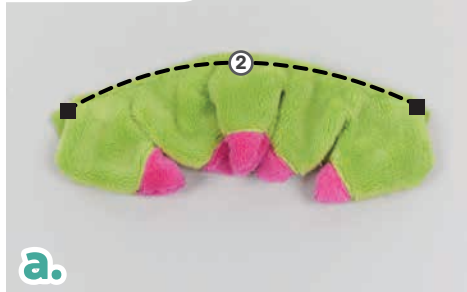
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15. BASTE THE REMAINING LEAVES

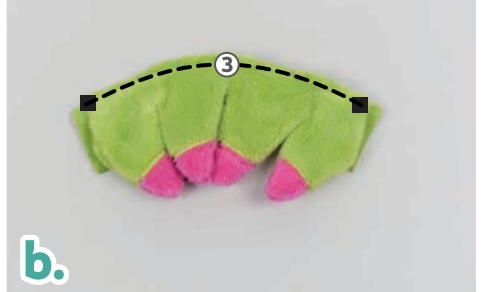
- Repeat step 14 with your remaining leaves and body segments.
LEAVES #2 (G2) will join to **SEGMENT #2** (E2) at **point 2**.
- LEAVES #3** (G3) will join to **SEGMENT #3** (E3) at **point 3**.
- LEAVES #4** (G4) will join to **SEGMENT #4** (E4) at **point 4**.
- Lastly **LEAVES #5** (G5) will join to **SEGMENT #5** (E5) at **point 5**.

→ *Make sure there's a 1/4" space at each end of the leaves for the seam allowance.*

SEGMENT #2:



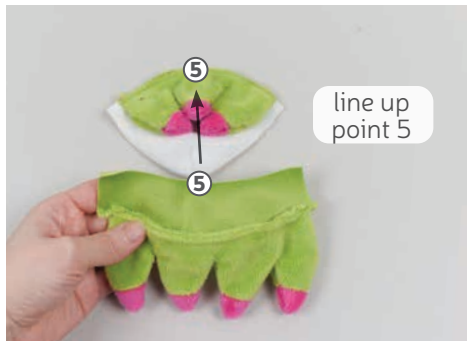
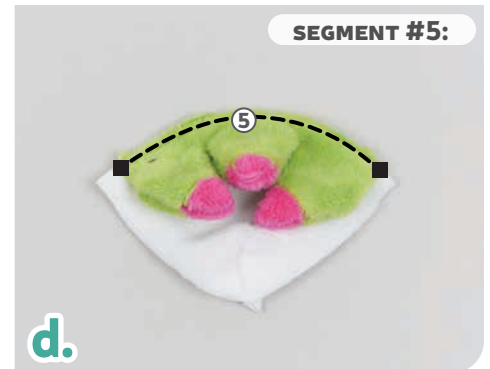
SEGMENT #3:



SEGMENT #4:



SEGMENT #5:

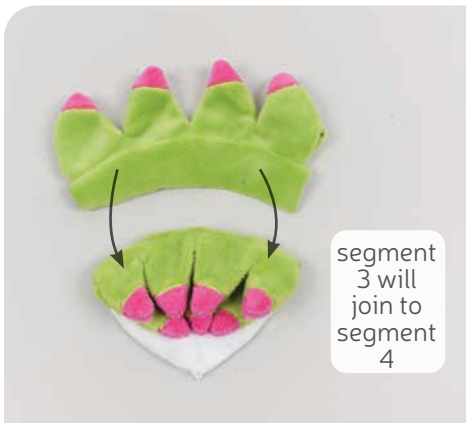


16. START ATTACHING THE BODY SEGMENTS

- When step 15 is complete, all of your leaves should be attached to the body segments. Up next the segments will be joined in a column as shown. This starts from the bottom up so the numbers will count down.
 - Start by grabbing your **BODY SEGMENT #5** and **#4** pieces (E5 & E4). These pieces will join together along the edge labeled with **point 5**. Align the pieces with right sides facing, and **LEAVES #5** should be secured within the seam.
 - Sew the body segment #4 to #5 along the edge with **point 5**. The leaves should be secured in the seam.
- **TIP:** for all of the body seams, always be sure that only one layer of leaves are in between the body pieces. There should never be two layers of leaves.

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17. ATTACH SEGMENT #3

- Grab your **BODY SEGMENT #3** piece (E3). This piece will join to **SEGMENT #4** (E4) along the edge labeled with **point 4**.
- Align the pieces with right sides facing, and **LEAVES #4** (G4) should be secured within the seam. Pin the fabrics together.
- Sew the body segment #3 to #4 along the edge with **point 4**. The leaves should be secured in the seam.

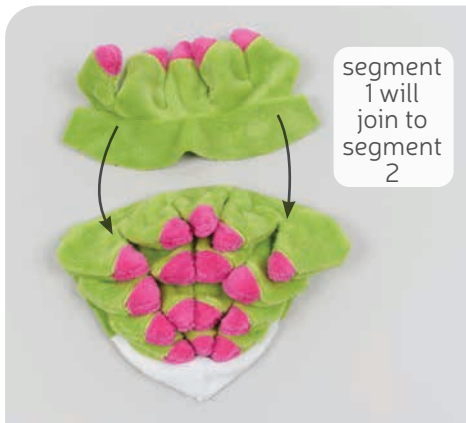


18. ATTACH SEGMENT #2

- Grab your **BODY SEGMENT #2** piece (E2). This piece will join to **SEGMENT #3** (E3) along the edge labeled with **point 3**.
- Align the pieces with right sides facing, and **LEAVES #3** (G3) should be secured within the seam. Pin the fabrics together.
- Sew the body segment #2 to #3 along the edge with **point 3**. The leaves should be secured in the seam.

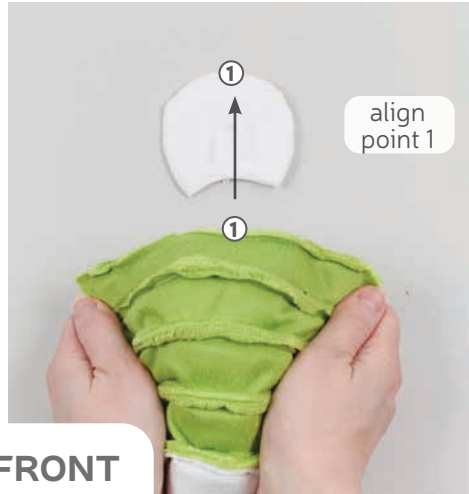
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19. ATTACH SEGMENT #1

- Grab your **BODY SEGMENT #1** piece (E1). This piece will join to **SEGMENT #2** (E2) along the edge labeled with **point 2**.
- Align the pieces with right sides facing, and **LEAVES #2** (G2) should be secured within the seam. Pin the fabrics together.
- Sew the body segment #1 to #2 along the edge with **point 2**. The leaves should be secured in the seam.



20. ATTACH THE BODY FRONT

- Finally, grab your **BODY FRONT** piece (D). The rest of the body segments will join to the body front along the edge labeled with **point 1**.
- Take your **BODY SEGMENT #1** piece and align it with the body front along the top curved edge. **LEAVES #1** (G1) should be secured within the seam. Pin the fabrics together.
- Sew body segment #1 to the body front along the edge with **point 1**. The leaves should be secured in the seam.

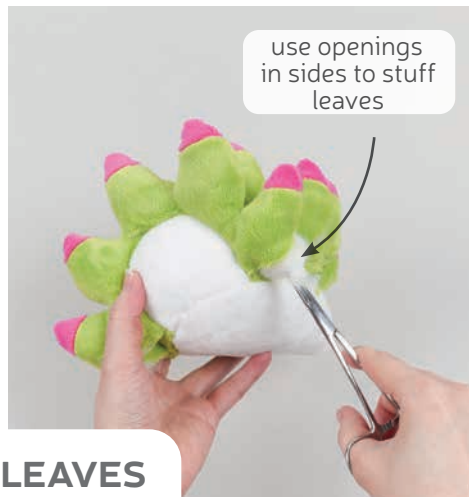
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21. ATTACH THE BODY BOTTOM

- Grab your **BODY BOTTOM** piece (F). The bottom opening of the body will join around the edge of this piece. You can also look for the **numbered points** for help with alignment. The center front will line up at **point 6** and the center back tail tip will line up at **point 7**. Make sure right sides are facing and pin the body to the bottom all the way around.
- If you haven't already, note the **opening for turning markings** found on the paper pattern for the body bottom. Transfer these markings onto the wrong side of the fabrics you've just pinned. Sew entirely around the body bottom through **points 6 and 7**, but leave the **opening for turning** that you marked.
- Turn the body right side out through the opening when complete.



22. STUFF THE BODY & LEAVES

- Begin stuffing the body with stuffing. Be sure to get small bits in the tip of the tail so it keeps its shape and doesn't deflate over time.
- To give more body to the leaves, stuff them with small bits of stuffing. Use hemostats or a chopstick to push small bits of stuffing through the openings and into each leaf. The small gaps between the leaves will give you the space to push the stuffing through.
- Continue stuffing the rest of the leaves all the way down the body.

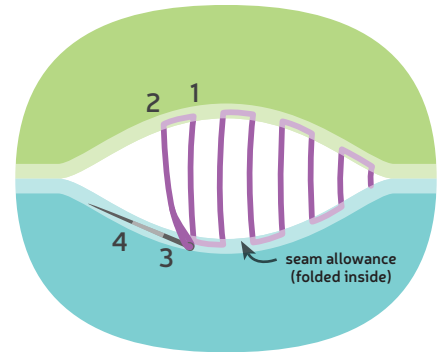
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23. CLOSE THE BODY

- Once the body is filled, make sure the seam allowances in the opening are tucked inside and prepare to ladder stitch it closed. Thread a hand-sewing needle and knot it at the end. Insert the needle from the inside of the opening and out of the plush near one edge of the opening. This will leave the knot inside the plush.
- Ladder stitch the body closed. Take a $\frac{1}{8}$ " stitch into the fold of one side of the opening, then go across and take another. Keep stitching down the opening until you reach the end.
- When you're finished, stitch a knot into the end of the seam. Then insert the needle near the finished knot. Bring the needle out about 1-2" away and pull it through. Pull the thread taut while snipping the thread. The excess thread should sink back inside the plush -- all hidden!



24. CLOSE THE LEAVES

- Repeat this same process for the openings on all of the leaves. Tuck in the seam allowance and ladder stitch the **openings for stuffing** closed.
- At this time you can also check the leaves to be sure they lie flat how you want. If you want a set of leaves to stay in one position, you can stitch a little bit of the leaves to the body to hold it in place. For example here, the **FRONT LEAVES** flop forward a little bit. To keep them tilted back, sew the leaves to the body using a ladder stitch about $\frac{1}{4}$ " up from the seam. Repeat this for any other leaves you think need securing.

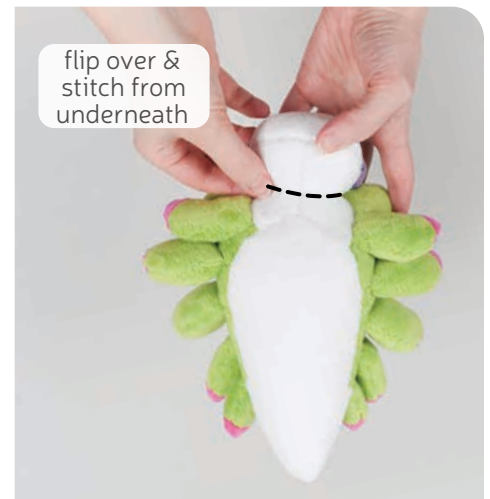


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25. STUFF & CLOSE THE HEAD

- Grab your **HEAD** from before. Use the opening for turning to stuff it with stuffing.
- Tuck in the seam allowances in the opening and ladder stitch the head closed.



26. ATTACH THE HEAD

- Grab your head as well as your body so far. Align the head onto the front of the body so the eyes are facing outward. To mimic the look of the leaf sheep, the top half of the **HEAD BACK** (C) is attached to the top of the **BODY FRONT** (D). This makes the chin stick out more. You can also look for the **stitching guide** on the paper pattern for more help.
- Attach the head to the body front by ladder stitching around the **stitching guide** until the head is secured.
- Flip the body over and stitch underneath to get around the entire circle.

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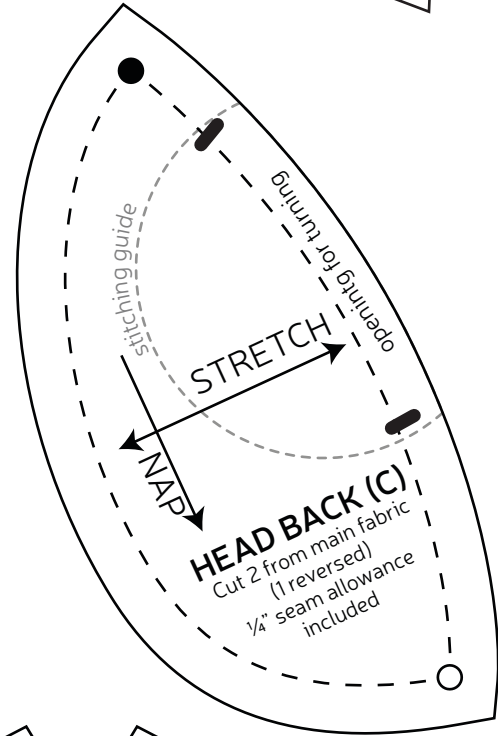
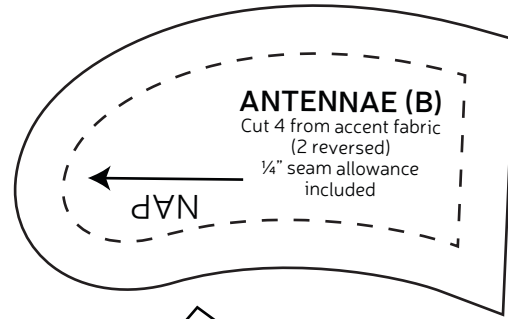
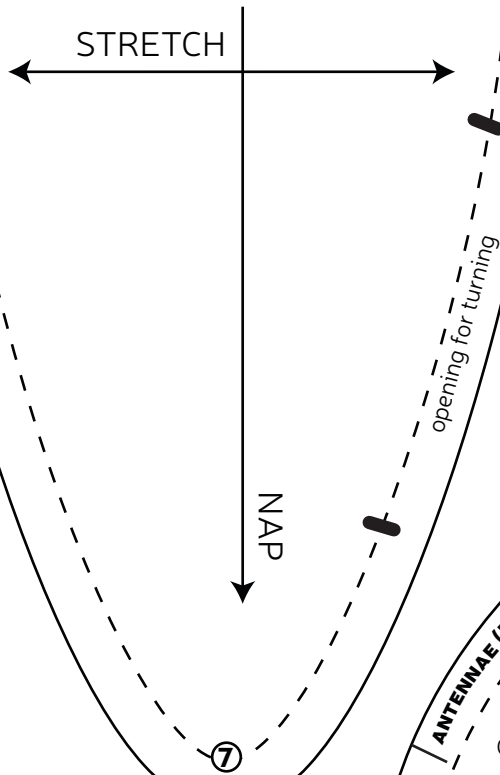
Leaf Sheep Plush

P A T T E R N

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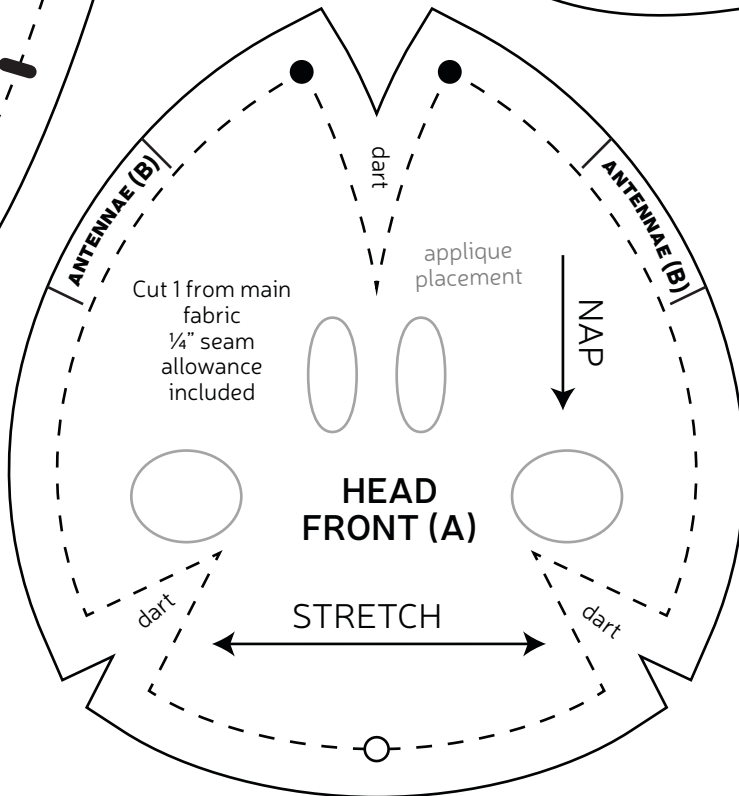
BODY BOTTOM (F)

Cut 1 from main fabric
1/4" seam allowance included



HEAD BACK (C)

Cut 2 from main fabric
(1 reversed)
1/4" seam allowance included

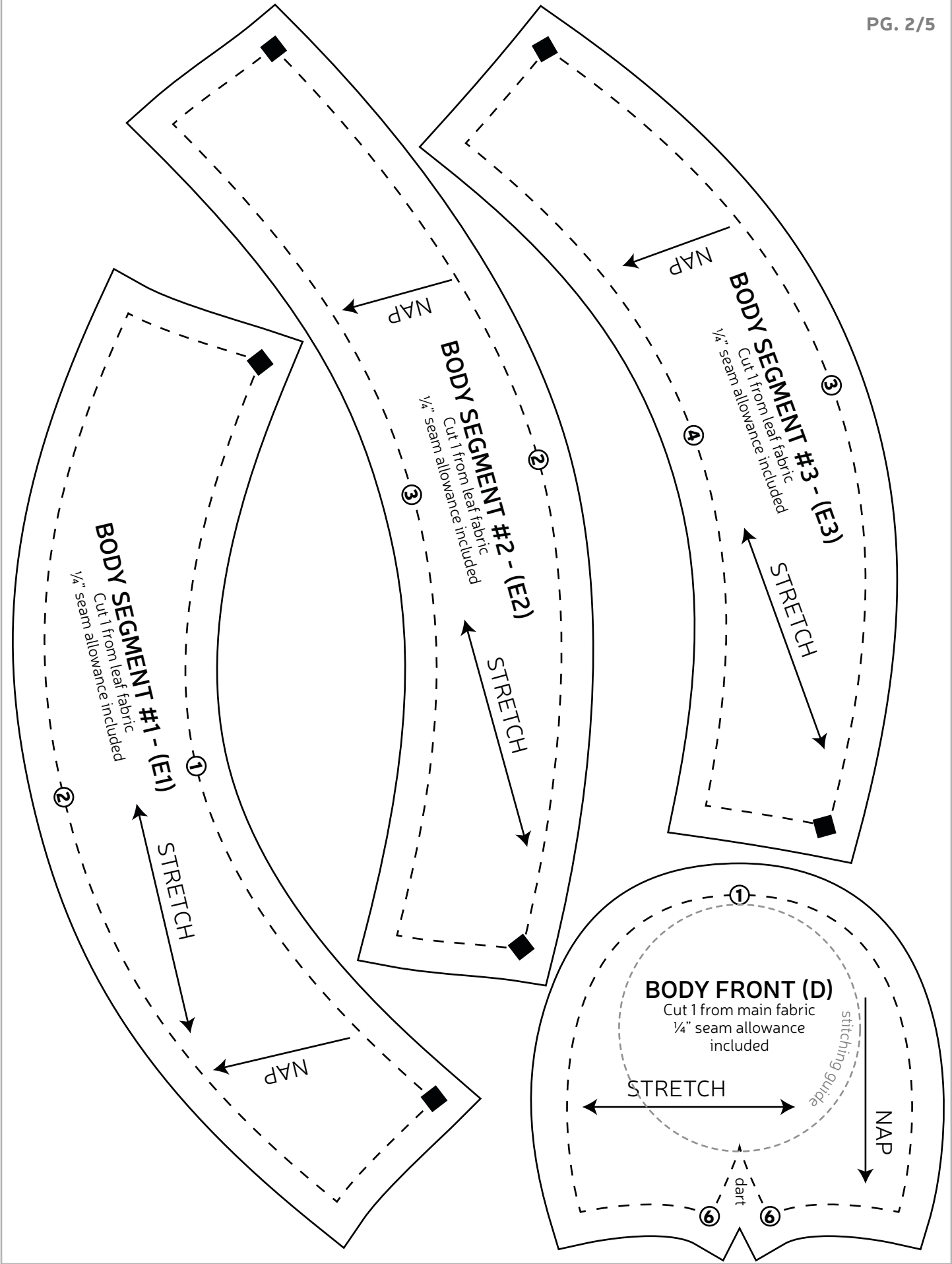


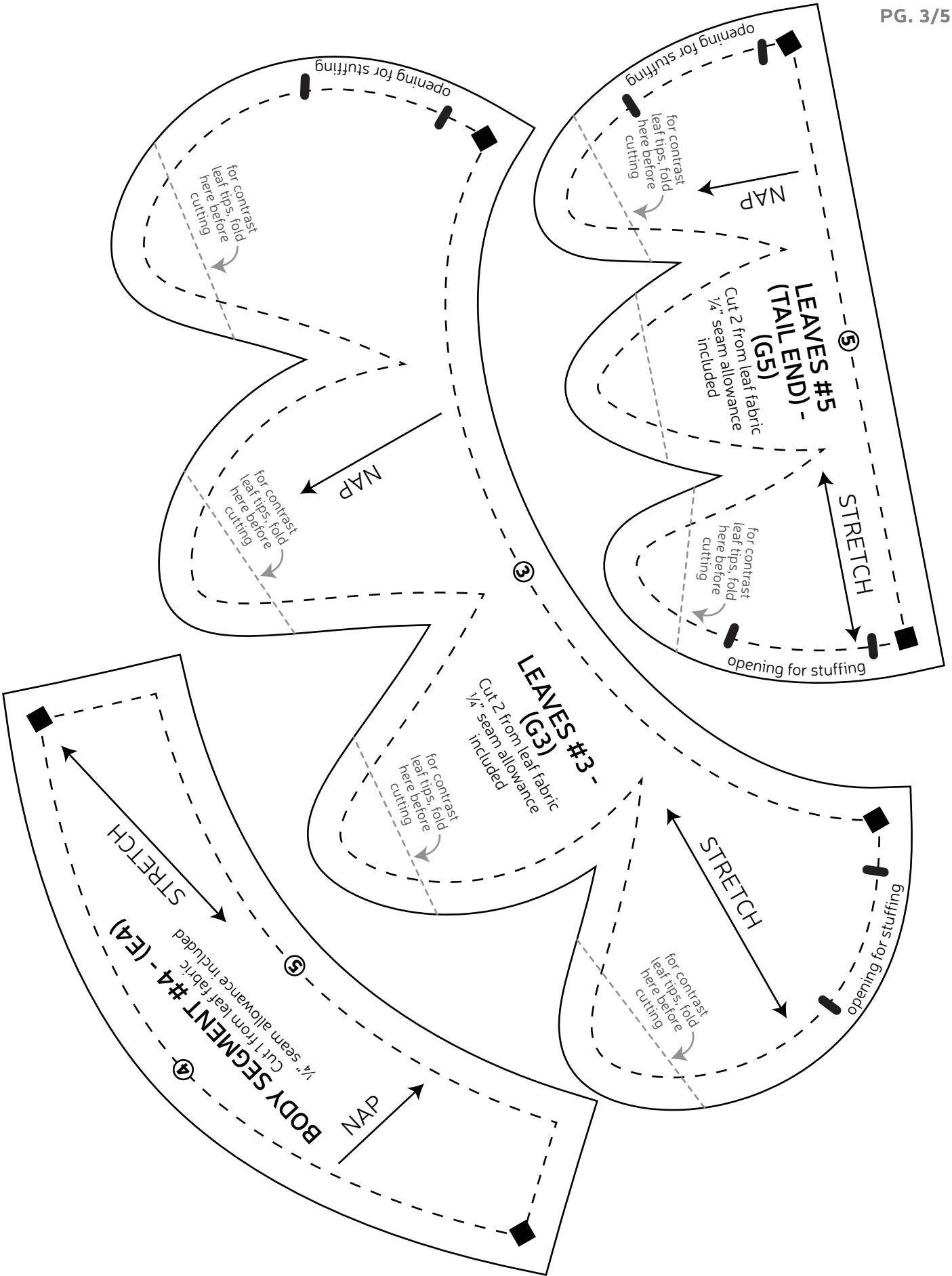
HEAD FRONT (A)

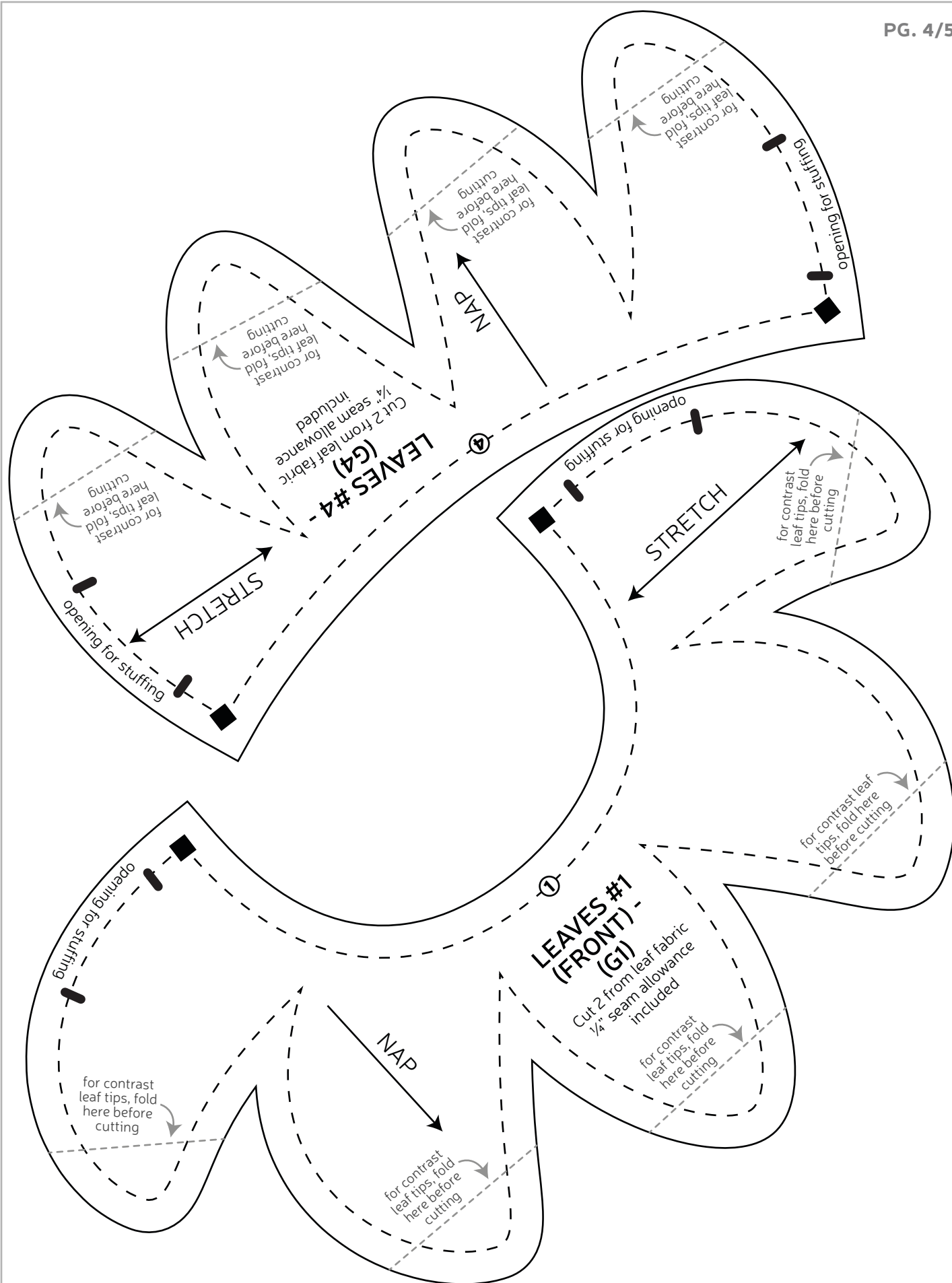
Cut 1 from main fabric
1/4" seam allowance included

TEST SQUARE 2"

measure this square to be sure you've printed at the proper proportions







EYE
applique
trace & cut 2
from black



BLUSH
applique
trace & cut 2
from pink

